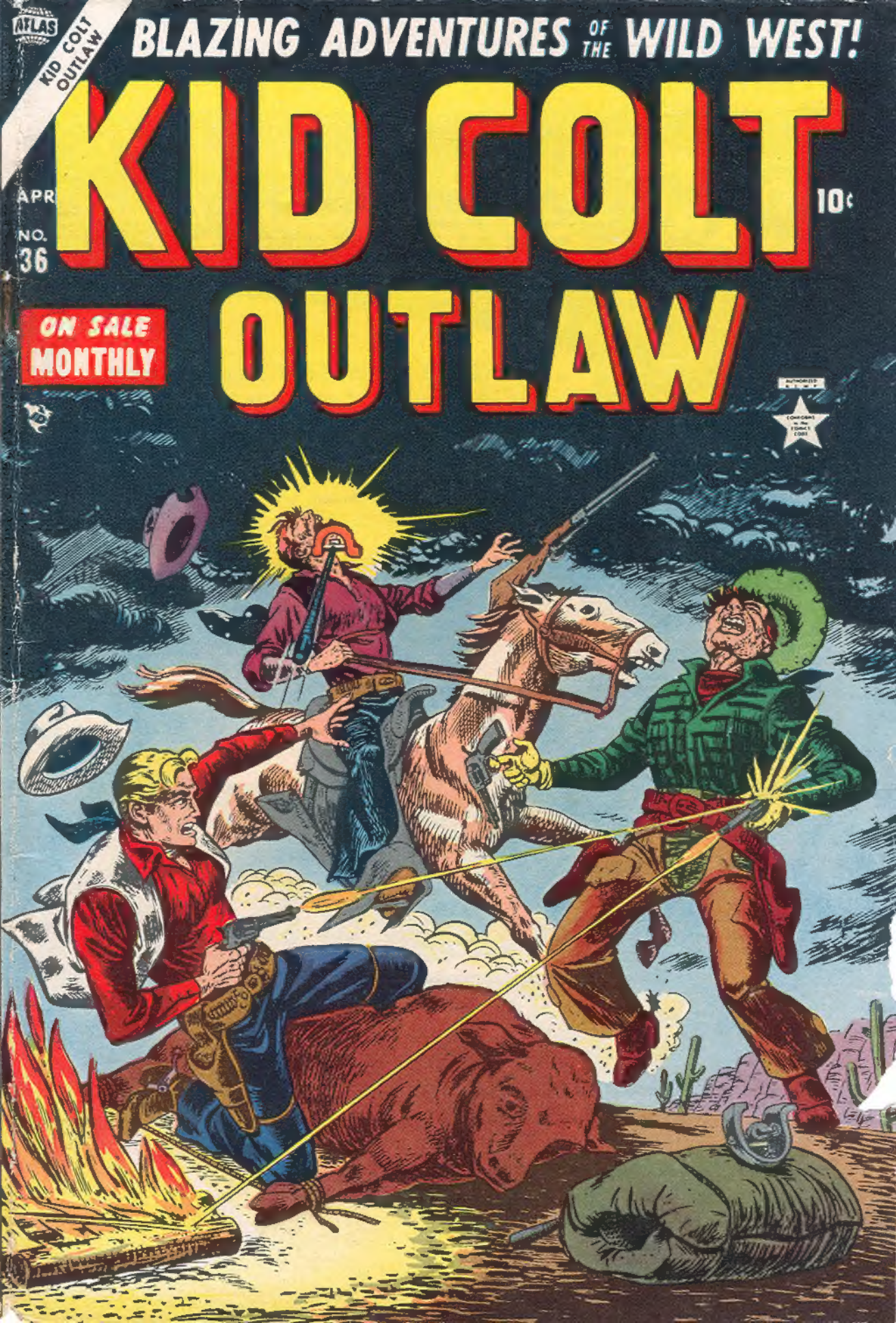
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KID COLT OUTLAW
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KID COLT OUTLAW
APR
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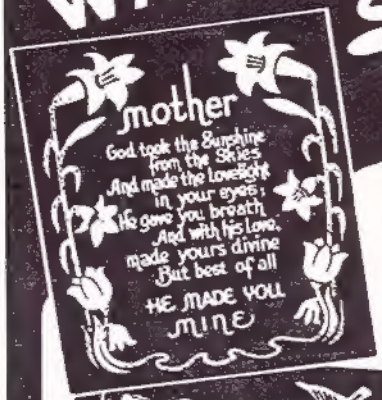

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If I should Die before I Wake,
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KID COLT OUTLAW

STRING HIM UP!
HE'S GUILTY, ALL RIGHT! THE DIRTY, THIEVIN' RUSTLER!
HANG 'IM! DON'T WASTE TIME ON A TRIAL!
LIKE A MOUNTING STORM, THE ANGRY VOICES GREW IN INTENSITY AND HATRED, LIKE A SOARING FLAME, LEAPED HIGHER... AND HIGHER... AND THE CRY WAS FOR BLOOD AND VENGEANCE, AND FOR... DEATH BY HANGING!
JACK KELLER

BUT THE SCENE WAS BEING VIEWED THROUGH OTHER EYES THAN THOSE OF THE ANGRY CROWD... CLEAR, GREY EYES THAT MEASURED DISTANCE AND SPACE WITH PERFECT ACCURACY...

I CAN'T STAND BY AN' SEE A MAN HUNG UP... NOT WHEN THEY HAVEN'T EVEN GIVEN HIM A TRIAL! I RECKON I'LL HAFTA COOL OFF THEIR TEMPERS SOME, AN' COOL 'EM FAST!

BUT WITH A QUICK, SNAPPING ACTION, THE MUSCULAR HANDS SEIZED THE GUNMAN'S WRIST FROM BEHIND AND THEN YANKED FORWARD...
HEY!
I DON'T TAKE TO GUN-POKIN' IN THE BACK!
NOW IF YOU CARE TO MAKE SOMETHIN' OF IT, WE'LL FACE EACH OTHER MAN TO MAN!
THUD!
I'LL MAKE SOMETHIN' OF... OWWWW!
CRACK!
THEN, IN A WHIRLING MOTION, THE LITTLE FIGURE FACED THE STUNNED CROWD...
KEEP THEM HANDS RIGHT WHERE THEY ARE! I DON'T FAVOR GUN-PLAY, BUT I'LL DROP THE FIRST MAN THAT MAKES A MOVE!
AN' HE C'N DO IT, TOO! THET'S KID COLT, THE OUTLAW!
A GASP OF AWE SWEPT THE CROWD AT THE MENTION OF THE FAMOUS NAME, AND THEY FELL BACK RESPECTFULLY BEFORE HIS MEASURED STRIDE...
NOW GET THAT NOOSE OFF HIS NECK, AN' DON'T BE ALL DAY DOIN' IT!
SURE, KID! ANYTHIN' YUH SAY!
I RECKON THIS PROVES JOHNNY'S GUILT! ONLY AN OUTLAW WOULD COME TUH THE HELP OF ANOTHER!
I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS YOUNG FELLA BEFORE, BUT I FIGURE A MAN DESERVES A TRIAL! I'M GOIN' TO TAKE HIM WITH ME AN' HEAR HIS SIDE OF THINGS! IF I'M WRONG, I'LL BE BRINGIN' HIM BACK!
FORCING THE OTHERS TO THROW THEIR GUNS INTO A NEARBY GULLY, KID COLT MOUNTED HIS STALLION, WITH YOUNG JOHNNY FALCON BEHIND HIM...
THIS AIN'T THE END, KID COLT! WE'LL BE MEETIN' AGAIN, AN' WHEN WE DO, I'LL BE READY!
FAIR ENOUGH! WHO KNOWS... IT MAY BE SOONER THAN WE THINK!

LATE THAT SAME NIGHT, AT A CAMPFIRE IN THE HILLS...
...AND THAT'S THE WHOLE TRUTH, KID COLT! SOMEONE PLANTED THEM STOLEN CATTLE IN WITH MY HERD, AND THE NEXT THING I KNOW THEY'RE RIDIN' ME OUTTA TOWN FOR A HANGIN'! BUT I NEVER STOLE 'EM! I SWEAR I DIDN'T!
YOU SAY IT LIKE YOU MEANT IT, JOHNNY, AN' I BELIEVE YOU!
THEN THAT MEANS SOMEONE ELSE IS DOIN' ALL THE RUSTLIN' THAT'S BEEN GOIN' ON LATELY! DOES THAT BRING ANYONE SPECIAL TO MIND?
SAM LABOWE! HIS RANGE IS NEXT TO MINE, AN' I KNOW HE'S BEEN RUNNIN' HERDS THROUGH, BUT ONLY AT NIGHT! HIS FOREMAN IS SLAGG, THE MAN YOU HAD THE RUN-IN WITH!
WE'RE GOIN' TO GET YOU A HORSE FROM A FRIEND OF MINE WHO LIVES IN THESE PARTS! THEN WE'RE GOIN' TO RIDE OVER TO YOUR NEIGHBOR, SAM LABOWE, AN' SEE WHAT WE C'N SEE!
MEANWHILE, AT THE LABOWE RANCH...
IT AIN'T GOOD, LABOWE! WITH JOHNNY FALCON SLIPPIN' OUTTA THAT NOOSE, AN' KID COLT LENDIN' A HAND, THINGS C'N GET MIGHTY ROUGH!
AND ALL BECAUSE YOU BUNGLERS MESSED THINGS UP! I MADE FALCON LOOK GUILTY TO DRAW SUSPICION AWAY FROM US!
WHAT WE'VE GOT TO DO NOW IS MOVE OUT THAT MIXED HERD OF STOLEN STEERS, AN' GET IT OVER THE BORDER! MEANWHILE, THERE'S A STIFF PRICE ON FALCON'S HEAD, AN' THE ORDERS ARE SHOOT TO KILL!
WE GIT RID OF THE EVIDENCE AND FALCON IS SILENCED FOR GOOD, EH? I'LL GET THET HERD MOVIN' RIGHT NOW!
TWENTY MINUTES LATER, A NARROW CANYON FLOOR SHUDDERED TO THE STIR OF HOOFBEATS ON THE MOVE...
GIT THE LEAD OUTTA THEM SADDLES, AND GIT THIS BEEF A-MOVIN'!
BUT AS THE RUSTLED HERD SWEPT BY, TWO CROUCHING FIGURES PEERED OUT FROM BEHIND SOME BOULDERS...
THOSE MUST BE STOLEN STEERS, ALL RIGHT! OTHERWISE, WHY WOULD HE HAVE KEPT 'EM HIDDEN IN THIS CANYON?
GOOD QUESTION, JOHNNY! MEBBE SOON WE'LL HAVE THE ANSWER!

MEANWHILE, THE RUSTLERS CONTINUED WITH THEIR PLANS...

ALL RIGHT, HENSHAW, YOU KNOW WHAT TUH DO NOW! RIDE OUT TO THE MOUTH OF THE CANYON AN' MAKE SURE THAR AIN'T ANYONE AROUND! THEN GIVE US THE SIGNAL AN' WE'LL PASS 'EM OUT!
RIGHT, SLAGG!

BUT WHILE HENSHAW RODE ON AHEAD, TWO OTHERS RODE FASTER, THE HOOFS OF THEIR GALLOPING HORSES BITING DEEP INTO THE SOFT EARTH...

WHAT NOW?
THE FIRST THING IS TO GET THAT MAN ON THE WAY OUT! I'M NOT SURE WHAT WE'LL BE DOIN' NEXT, BUT MEBBE HE'LL BE SUPPLYIN' THE FOLLOWIN' MOVE!

REACHING THE CANYON'S MOUTH, THE PAIR SLIPPED OUT OF THEIR SADDLES AND SCRAMBLED UP A ROCKY SLOPE...

WITH PERFECT TIMING...

DRAGGED FROM HIS SADDLE, THE ENRAGED RUSTLER MADE THE UNHAPPY CHOICE OF REACHING FOR HIS GUN...

D-DON'T SHOOT! I'LL DO ANYTHIN' YUH WANT! GIMME A BREAK!
I FIGGER YOU AN' SLAGG MUST HAVE SOME KINDA SIGNAL IN CASE YOU WANT HIM HERE! BRING HIM OUT! BUT REMEMBER...NO TRICKS!

MOMENTS LATER, TWO WHISTLING NOTES DRIFTED THROUGH THE NARROW CANYON...

SOUNDS LIKE HENSHAW!
JEST LIKE 'IM! YUH CAN'T GIVE THET CRITTER A SIMPLE CHORE WITHOUT HIS FOULIN' IT UP! C'MON... WE'LL RIDE OUT AN' SEE WHAT AILS HIM!

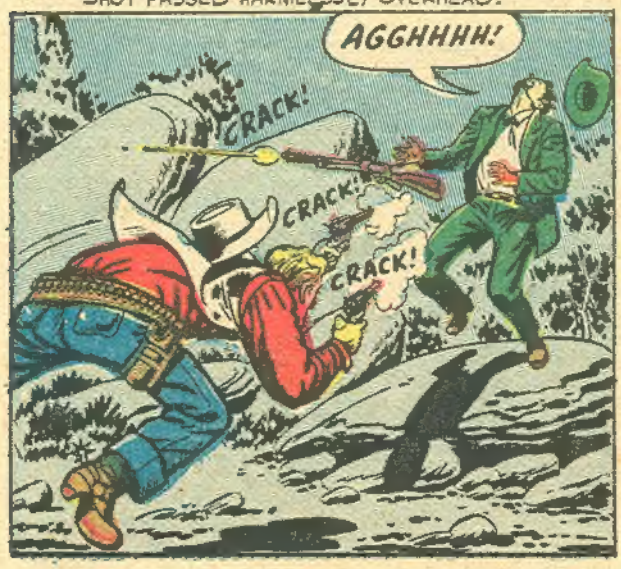
PLAYING HIS HAND CAREFULLY, THE KID PLACED HENSHAW IN THE OPEN, WHILE, HE AND JOHNNY KEPT HIM IN THEIR SIGHTS FROM BEHIND ROCKY COVER...

AND IT *DID!*

WITH FLASHING SPEED, THE DAUNTLESS KID STEPPED CLEAR OF HIS COVER, GIVING THEM AN EQUAL CHANCE IN THE BLAZING DUEL...

BUT ONE TERRIFYING SECOND LATER...

USING A TECHNIQUE SECOND TO NONE, THE KID WHIRLED, WHILE DROPPING INTO A LOW CROUCH...AND LABOWE'S SHOT PASSED HARMLESSLY OVERHEAD!

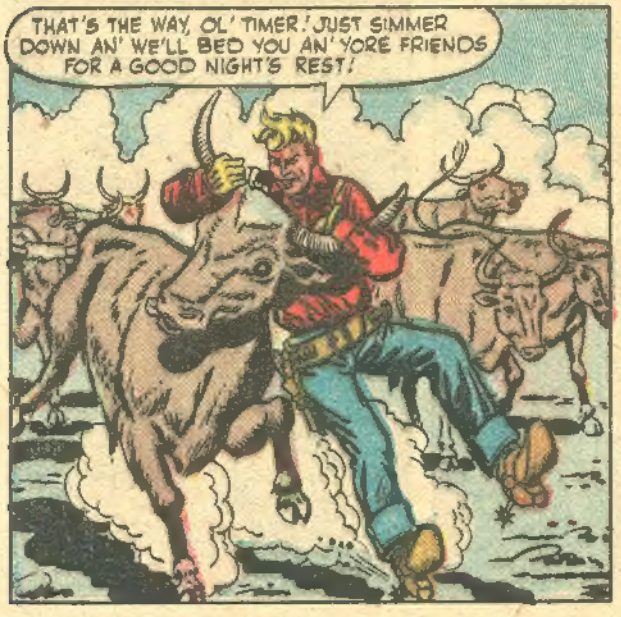


SUDDENLY, A NEW NOTE OF TERROR FILLED THE AIR... THE OMINOUS RUMBLE OF TRAMPLING HOOFS!

IT'S THE *HERD!* THOSE SHOTS MUST'VE STAMPEDED 'EM AN' THEY'RE HEADED STRAIGHT FER *DEVIL'S GORGE!*
YOU KEEP AN EYE ON THESE SKUNKS, JOHNNY! STEEL AN' I GOT WORK TO DO!

THE RACE OF DEATH WAS ON! A FEARLESS RIDER AND HIS POWERFUL HORSE CHALLENGED THE HURTLING, PLUNGING FURY OF A HERD DRIVEN MAD!

TAUT MOMENTS FOLLOWED BUT POWERFUL ARMS SLOWLY PULLED THE HUGE SPREAD OF HORNS IN THE OPOSITE DIRECTION! QUICKLY THE PACK WHEELED IN PURSUIT OF THEIR LEADER, WITH ONLY FEET TO SPARE FROM THE LIP OF THE PLUNGING GORGE...



BUT AS THE PACK BUNCHED UP TO A HALT...

DON'T REACH FER YORE GUNS, KID COLT! THAR AIN'T A MAN HERE WHO WOULD DRAW AGAINST YUH! THIS STOLEN HERD YUH SAVED REPRESENTS STOCK FROM EVERY RANCHER IN THIS COUNTY!

WE HEARD THE SHOOTIN' AN' FOUND JOHNNY WITH THEM VARMINTS WELL IN HAND! NO QUESTION WHO'S GUILTY NOW, AN' WE SHORE OWE YOU A HEAP O' THANKS! I'D LIKE TUH SAY MORE, BUT I KNOW YO'RE NOT THE KINDA MAN TUH WASTE TIME ON WORDS!
I RECKON NOT, SHERIFF!

THIS MAN OF ACTION WAS ANXIOUS TO BE ON HIS WAY... AND SO HE RODE OFF TO WHERE THE BLUSH OF DAWN TOUCHED THE WESTERN SKY... TO A NEW DAY AND THE HOPE FOR NEW ADVENTURE!

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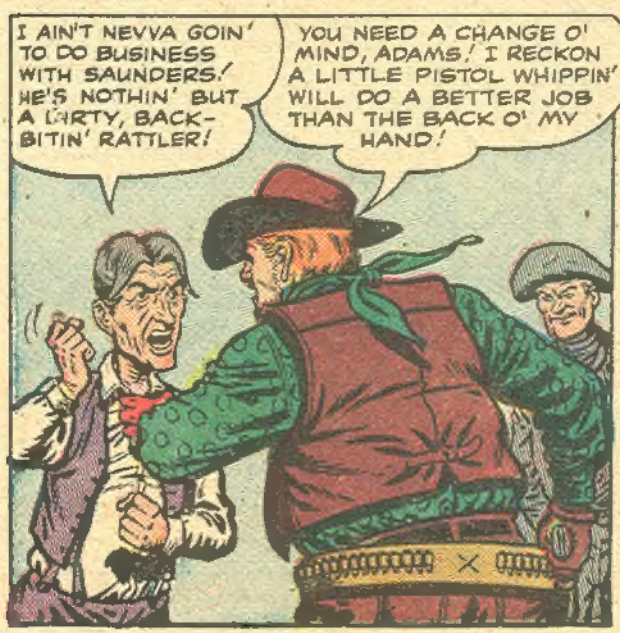
KID COLT OUTLAW

THERE WAS THE GIRL'S SCREAM, THE CRY OF PAIN FROM THE OLD MAN, AND THE SHARP SLAP AS THE HEAVY HAND STRUCK AGAIN AND AGAIN WITH REPEATED FORCE...

NO! DON'T HIT HIM AGAIN... PLEASE!
OHHHH!
FER THE LAST TIME, ADAMS, ARE YUH GONNA TAKE MR. SAUNDERS' PROPOSITION, OR DO I HAFTA GIT REAL ROUGH?
JACK KELLER


I AIN'T NEVVA GOIN' TO DO BUSINESS WITH SAUNDERS! HE'S NOTHIN' BUT A DIRTY, BACK-BITIN' RATTLER!
YOU NEED A CHANGE O' MIND, ADAMS! I RECKON A LITTLE PISTOL WHIPPIN' WILL DO A BETTER JOB THAN THE BACK O' MY HAND!

CUT 'IM DOWN! BLAST 'IM OUTTA THET SADDLE!
OWW!
BANG BANG!
WITH A QUICK MOVEMENT, THE SLIM RIDER SLID FROM THE SADDLE, AND WITH DELIBERATE CARE SLIPPED HIS GUNS BACK INTO THEIR HOLSTERS.
NOW THAT YOU'VE HAD YORE FUN PUSHIN' AN OLD MAN, MEBBE YOU'LL TAKE ON SOMEONE CLOSER TO YOUR OWN AGE?
IT'LL BE A PLEASURE!
WITH A BELLOWING ROAR, REEVES CHARGED AND SWUNG, BUT...
OOOFF!
WHAM!
OHMMM!
I'M GIVIN' YOU THIRTY SECONDS TO DRAG THIS SIDE O' BEEF OUTTA HERE! START RAISIN' DUST ON THEM HOSSES OF YOURS BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND AN' SETTLE THINGS HERE AN' NOW!
W-WE'RE A-GOIN'!
AND WHEN THE PAN C-STRICKEN GUNMEN GALLOPED OFF...
THE NAME'S KID COLT, AN' I'M MIGHTY GLAD I WAS PASSIN' BY WHEN I DID!
NOT HALF AS GLAD AS WE ARE, KID! MY NAME'S ADAMS, AN' THIS IS MUH DAUGHTER GINNY! C'MON IN THE HOUSE AN' JOIN US IN A CUP O' HOT JAVA! RECKON WE C'N ALL STAND SOME!

A SHORT WHILE LATER...

THET SAUNDERS IS EVERYTHIN' I CALLED 'IM, AN' THEN SOME! HE'S USED EVERY DIRTY TRICK IN THE BOOK TUH MAKE ME SELL OUT MUH LAND, AN' WHEN I REFUSED HE SET HIS TOUGHIES AFTER ME!

HOW COME HE WANTS YORE LAND SO BAD?

MY LAND HAS SOME O' THE BEST WATER IN THE TERRITORY, AN' SAUNDERS WANTS IT FER HIS HERDS! I OFFERED HIM WATER PRIVILEGES AT A DECENT PRICE, BUT HE WANTS THE WHOLE WORKS, AND AT A PRICE I WOULDN'T TAKE EVEN IF I *WANTED* TO SELL, WHICH I *DON'T!*

I'VE BEEN ON THIS LAND ALL MY LIFE, AN' MUH FATHER BEFORE ME! I'M OLD NOW... I CAN'T FIGHT AS GOOD AS I USED TUH!

THAT'S WHY I'VE ASKED MY FATHER TO SELL OUT TO SAUNDERS! WE'RE NOT HIS MATCH, AND I'M AFRAID THAT SOME DAY HE'LL *KILL* DAD!

MAYBE *I* CAN BE OF SOME HELP? I FEEL I OUGHTTA HANG AROUND A FEW DAYS IN CASE THOSE HOMBRES DECIDE ON A RETURN VISIT! MEANWHILE, CAN YOU PUT ME UP?

WE'D DEEM IT A REAL PLEASURE, MR. COLT!

LATE THAT SAME EVENING IN THE SILVER SPUR SALOON, ONE OF THE MANY ENTERPRISES OPERATED BY THE UNSCRUPULOUS SAUNDERS...

IT'S NO USE, SAUNDERS! AS LONG AS THET CRITTER HANGS AROUND THE ADAMS SPREAD, WE'LL GET NOWHERE!

IN THAT CASE WE'LL BE NEEDING A *SPECIALIST*, AND I HAVE ONE ON THE WAY! I HIRED THIS FELLA LAST WEEK IN DODGE CITY, AN' HE SHOULD BE ARRIVING ANY TIME NOW!

THEN A COLD FLAT VOICE FROM THE DOORWAY BROUGHT THEM UP SHARP...

I'VE *ARRIVED*, SAUNDERS!

THAT'S HIM, ALL RIGHT! BOYS, MEET FLETCH GALLO! THEY SAY HE'S THE FASTEST SHOT THIS SIDE OF PURGATORY, BUT HE STILL HAS TO PROVE IT BY ME!

THE ANSWER CAME WITH A DEAFENING ROAR!

Y-YOU *PROVED* IT, GALLO! YOU'RE *HIRED!*

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE...

SKINNY

MEN ARE OFTEN ASHAMED TO STRIP FOR SPORTS OR FOR A SWIM!

GIRLS ARE NOT ALLURING AND DON'T HAVE EYE-CATCHING CURVES!

CHILDREN WHO WON'T EAT AND ARE UNDERWEIGHT, OFTEN CALLED SKINNY!

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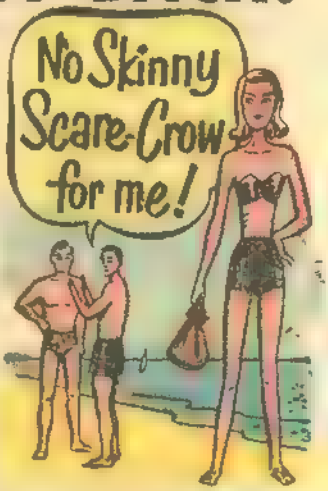

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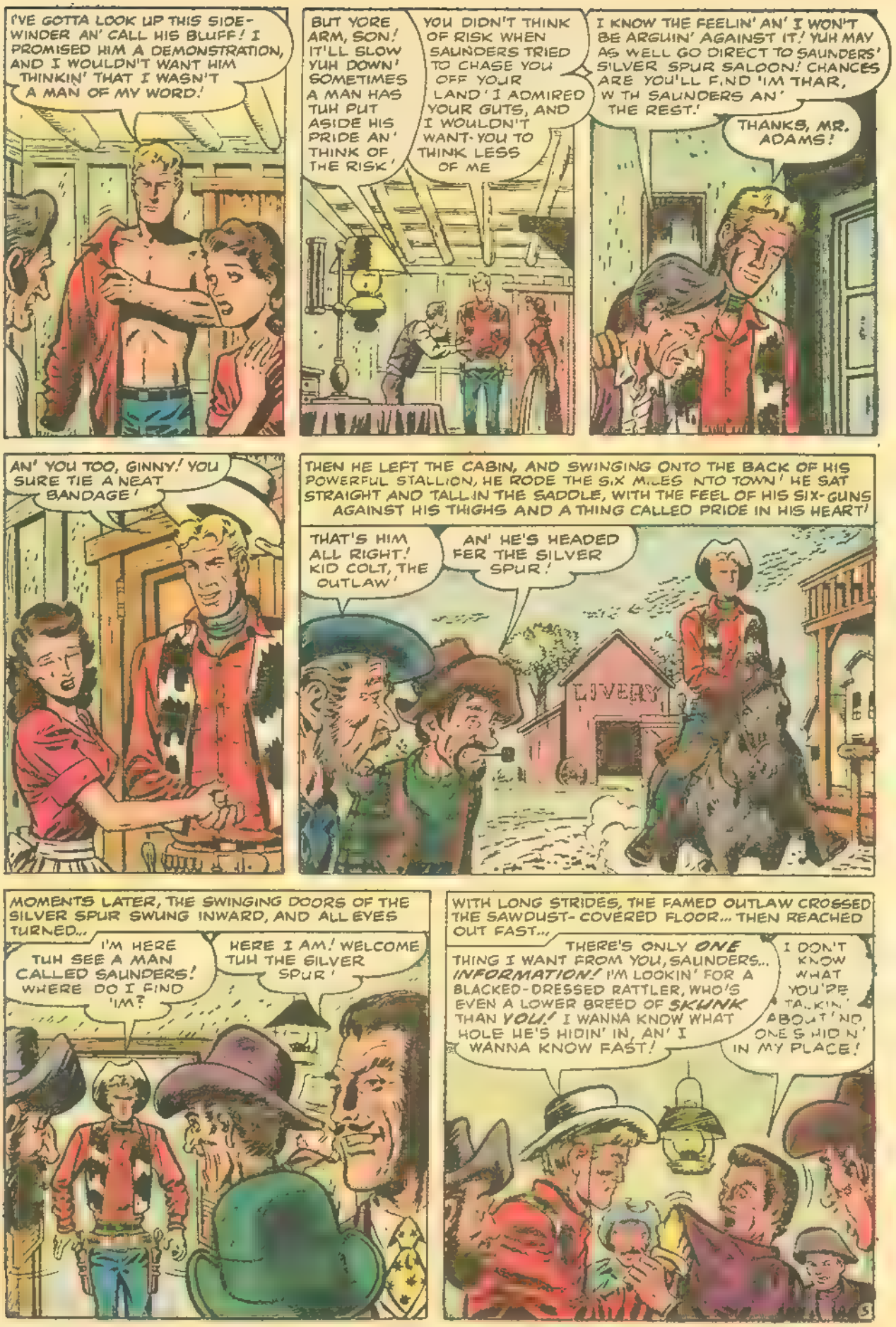
EARLY THE FOLLOWING MORNING WHILE THE KID WASHED THE SLEEP OUT OF HIS EYES...
THINGS WERE SURE QUIET AROUND HERE LAST NIGHT, GINNY! DIDN'T HEAR A THING TILL STEEL WHINNIED IN MY EAR THIS MORNIN'!
MAYBE IT WON'T BE PEACEFUL VERY LONG! THERE'S A RIDER HEADED THIS WAY! DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANYONE WE KNOW!
SLOWLY THE RIDER RODE UP AND THEN PULLED IN! A LONG TAUT MOMENT OF SILENCE PASSED, AND THEN THE BLACK-CLAD KILLER SPOKE...
I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN CALLED THE FASTEST DRAWIN' MAN IN THESE PARTS! MY OWN OPINION IS THET YOU'RE A DIRTY COWARD! OR DO YOU CARE TUH PROVE OTHERWISE?
I NEVER USE GUNPLAY WITHOUT PROPER CAUSE! BUT I'LL BE GLAD TO GIVE YOU A LITTLE DEMONSTRATION... MY GUNS ARE HANGIN' ON THAT PEG YONDER! LEMME GET 'EM ON!
SURE... G'WAN AN' GET 'EM!
NO... DON'T TRUST HIM!
THEN, WITH THE SPEED THAT HAD MADE HIS NAME LEGENDARY IN THE WEST, THE FAMED KID WHIRLED, AND A MOMENT LATER SENT THE BOWL OF SOAPY WATER STRAIGHT AT HIS ARMED OPPONENT!
MUH EYES!
SWISH
BUT WHEN HE LUNGED FOR HIS HANGING GUNS...
OHHHH!
WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A BACKWARD GLANCE, THE CRAVEN GUNMAN WHEELED HIS HORSE AROUND AND GALLOPED OFF...
LUCKY FOR ME THAT SOAPY WATER WAS HANDY! THREW HIS AIM OFF... SAVED MY HIDE!
DON'T TRY TO TALK! WE'LL HAVE TO GET YOU INSIDE! WE'LL HAVE TO TEND THIS WOUND RIGHT AWAY!
HELPING HIM INSIDE THE CABIN, GINNY WORKED WITH DEXTEROUS SPEED...
YOU'RE VERY LUCKY! THE BULLET PASSED THRU THE FLESHY PART OF THE ARM AND OUT, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO REST IT FOR AT LEAST A WEEK!
THAT'S TOO LONG, GINNY!
4


I'VE GOTTA LOOK UP THIS SIDE-WINDER AN' CALL HIS BLUFF! I PROMISED HIM A DEMONSTRATION, AND I WOULDN'T WANT HIM THINKIN' THAT I WASN'T A MAN OF MY WORD!
BUT YORE ARM, SON! IT'LL SLOW YUH DOWN' SOMETIMES A MAN HAS TUH PUT ASIDE HIS PRIDE AN' THINK OF THE RISK'
YOU DIDN'T THINK OF RISK WHEN SAUNDERS TRIED TO CHASE YOU OFF YOUR LAND' I ADMIRED YOUR GUTS, AND I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO THINK LESS OF ME
I KNOW THE FEELIN' AN' I WON'T BE ARGUIN' AGAINST IT! YUH MAY AS WELL GO DIRECT TO SAUNDERS' SILVER SPUR SALOON! CHANCES ARE YOU'LL FIND 'IM THAR, W TH SAUNDERS AN' THE REST.'
THANKS, MR. ADAMS!
AN' YOU TOO, GINNY! YOU SURE TIE A NEAT BANDAGE'
THEN HE LEFT THE CABIN, AND SWINGING ONTO THE BACK OF HIS POWERFUL STALLION, HE RODE THE SIX MILES NTO TOWN' HE SAT STRAIGHT AND TALL IN THE SADDLE, WITH THE FEEL OF HIS SIX-GUNS AGAINST HIS THIGHS AND A THING CALLED PRIDE IN HIS HEART!
THAT'S HIM ALL RIGHT! KID COLT, THE OUTLAW'
AN' HE'S HEADED FER THE SILVER SPUR!
LIVERY
MOMENTS LATER, THE SWINGING DOORS OF THE SILVER SPUR SWUNG INWARD, AND ALL EYES TURNED...
I'M HERE TUH SEE A MAN CALLED SAUNDERS! WHERE DO I FIND 'IM?
HERE I AM! WELCOME TUH THE SILVER SPUR'
WITH LONG STRIDES, THE FAMED OUTLAW CROSSED THE SAWDUST-COVERED FLOOR... THEN REACHED OUT FAST...
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING I WANT FROM YOU, SAUNDERS... INFORMATION! I'M LOOKIN' FOR A BLACKED-DRESSED RATTLER, WHO'S EVEN A LOWER BREED OF SKUNK THAN YOU! I WANNA KNOW WHAT HOLE HE'S HIDIN' IN, AN' I WANNA KNOW FAST!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT' NO ONE'S HID N' IN MY PLACE!
5

THAT'S RIGHT, KID COLT! NO ONE'S HIDIN'!
BUT AS THE GUNS ROARED, COLT SPUN SAUNDERS AROUND...
ARGHHHHH!
BANG!
BANG!
AND NOW HIS OWN GUNS BROKE WITH A DEAFENING ROAR!
BANG!
BANG!
CRASH
SLOWLY HE TURNED HIS BACK ON THE SCENE... THE SWINGING DOORS PARTED ONCE MORE...
LOOK, DAD! HE'S ALL RIGHT!
'COURSE HE IS! WHAT ELSE D'O YUH EXPECT?
BAKERY
SHE INSISTED ON FOLLOWIN' YUH HERE! SHE WANTS YUH TUH KNOW THET YOU C'N ALWAYS HAVE A PLACE WITH US! AN' IT GOES FER ME TOO!
BUT THERE COULD BE NO PLACE OF PERMANENCE FOR ONE LIKE HIM, AND THE KID HIMSELF KNEW IT THE BEST OF ALL...
BUT SHE COME MIGHTY CLOSE TO CONVINCIN' ME, STEEL, OLE FELLA! RECKON A PAIR O' PRETTY LIPS CAN BE AS POTENT AS A PAIR O' SIX-GUNS... SOMETIMES, MEBBE EVEN MORE!
THE END

ATLAS FOR THE BEST IN WESTERN THRILLS LOOK FOR THE ATLAS SEAL ON THE COVER! ATLAS

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RUSTLER'S HOUSE

"WHADDYA mean? No goin' to town till after the herd is sold?" shouted Tim Cassidy. "I'm sick and tired of wet-nursing them cows. After herding them longhorns clear across the hills, I want some fun in Dodge City. We're entitled—"

"Listen to me, you young ranny," said trail boss, Rod Kinley. "Your job ain't through until this herd is wrapped up and sold. You go into town for the blow-off when I say so, and not before."

Tim Cassidy's temper was boiling. He hadn't meant to get into an argument with Kinley, but he wasn't one to back down.

"I said, I'm going. Who saved the rotten herd, back in Rimrock, when they nearly stampeded? Me! Who caught that no-good hand who tried to rustle you blind? Me! Well, it's *me* that's going into Dodge City. I got a pretty little filly who's just waiting to see me, and I—"

Kinley's face was getting redder and redder. He dusted off his hat against his levis, and without looking up, said: "If you're going into town, you'd better draw your pay now. 'Cause you ain't coming back."

Tim was dumbfounded. He hadn't expected that. That's what a temper and a stubborn streak got you into. "If — if that's the way you want it?—"

"No," said Kinley. "That's the way *you* want it!" He turned on his heel.

"All right! I don't have to ride for no two-bit spread! There's better jobs to be had for the asking!" His heart sank inside of him as he said it, because he knew it wasn't true. Who, but his father's best friend — Rod Kinley — would have hired a young green cowhand? He liked the grizzly old trail boss. If only the man didn't have such a violent temper . . .

He rode through the main street of Dodge City on his black, and finally reined up in front of the Joker Saloon. He tied his horse to the hitching post and walked in through the bat-wing doors. His spirits had risen somewhat; he had two-hundred dollars in back pay, in his shirt pocket. It was more than he'd ever had before at one time, and it made him feel rich. He'd show Kinley and the rest of the boys what he was made of.

He stepped up to the bar, and ordered a whiskey. He was about to toss it down when a slick-looking customer came up to him.

"You with that Kinley, K-Bar, herd?" asked the man.

"Was. Up to today," said Tim.

"Oh? Quit?"

"Yeah, I'm thinking of going into business for myself," boasted Tim.

"Hm-m-m. Let me buy you a drink."

"No sir-ee," said Tim. "*I'll* buy you one."

He stood there — one foot on the brass railing — telling the story of the stampede, and the rustler and how he got fired. He told it over and over again, drinking as he did. Finally, after about the twentieth time, he noticed that the man was gone. He shrugged his shoulders, had a couple of more drinks, and then dug into his shirt pocket for his roll of money.

"Hey! It's gone! I been robbed!"

The bartender looked at him with narrowed eyes. "I got five dollars coming."

"That man! He musta stole my money!"

"What about the bill?"

Tim started heading for the door, in the direction of the stranger that had been drinking with him, when he noticed two men — one on each side of him — and both of them wore deputies' badges.

He shook the bars of his cell. It was early next morning and he had only a vague remembrance of having been hauled into jail. A black eye and a swollen jaw were testimony to the fact that he had not gone

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT STORY...

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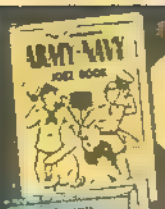

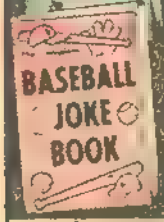

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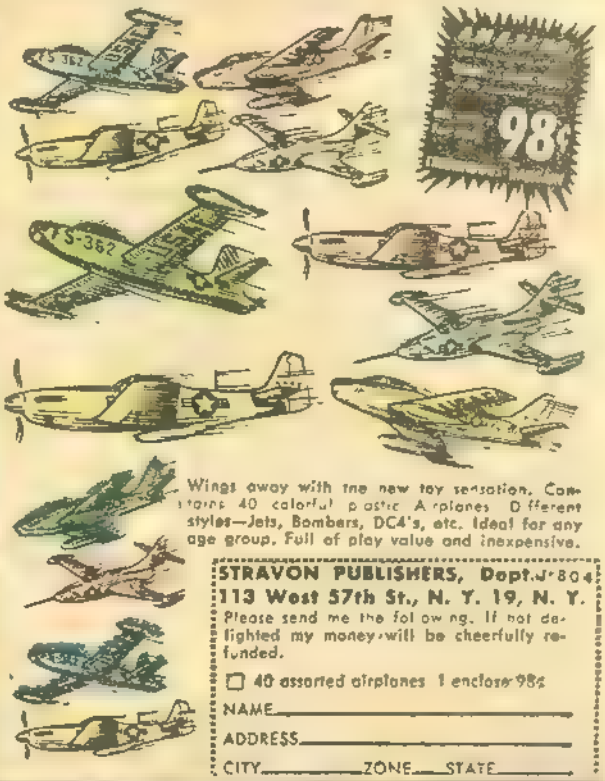

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IF THERE WAS A MORE LOVED AND RESPECTED COUPLE IN THE VILLAGE OF LEADVILLE THAN DOC MASTERS AND HIS GENTLE HORSE ICHABOD, NOBODY KNEW WHO IT MIGHT BE...

GOOD MORNING, DOC! POOR ICHABOD LOOKS STARVED! I'LL HAVE AN OATPIE BAKED FOR HIM IF YOU'LL DROP BY AT THE HOUSE!

MANY THANKS, MRS. KING... MAYBE LATER! I'M AFRAID YOU GOOD PEOPLE ARE SPOILING ICHABOD! ALL HE NEEDS IS EXERCISE!

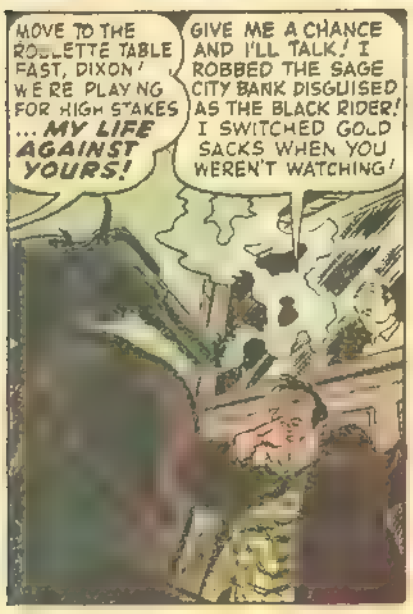
IF THAT HORSE IS ALIVE, MOVE HIM OFF TO ONE SIDE, AMIGO! I WANT TO PASS!

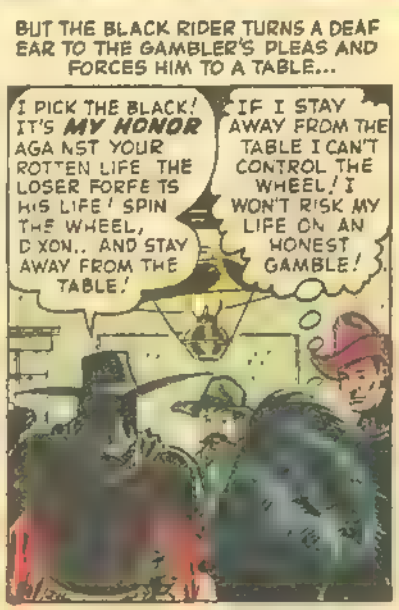
THERE'S PLENTY OF ELBOW ROOM IN LEADVILLE, STRANGER! IT SEEMS TO ME THERE'S LOTS OF PASSING SPACE HERE!

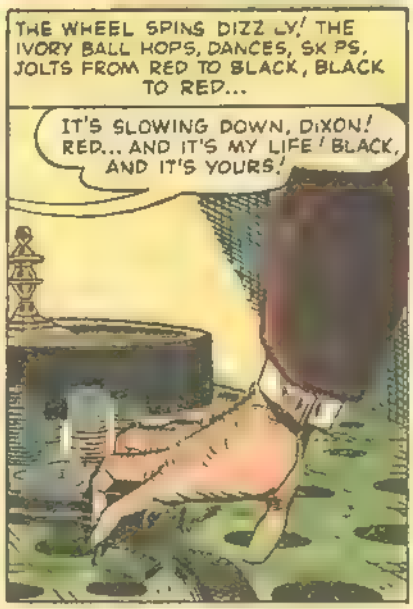
I SAID WE AIM TO PASS! NOW MOVE!
MY NAME IS DEUCE DIXON, MISTER, AND I'LL BET ON ANYTHING... ANY ODDS, ANY AMOUNT! I'LL WAGER TEN-TO-ONE THAT SPAVINED OLD CAYUSE CAN THROW YOU!
I'M NOT A BETTING MAN, BUT I DOUBT IF POOR ICHABOD COULD DO THAT!
I DON'T THINK THOSE ODDS WERE FAIR, MISTER! I'LL MAKE IT A HUNDRED TO ONE THE HORSE CAN THROW YOU!
YOU'D BETTER SAVE YOUR MONEY! GOOD DAY TO YOU, SIR!
A SPURRED BOOT JABS VICIOUSLY INTO ICHABOD'S FLANK, AND...
HAW HAW HAW! I SWEAR I DIDN'T THINK THAT CAYUSE HAD IT IN HIM!
IT WAS PROBABLY HIS LAST MOVE! HA HA HA!
I EXPECT TO BE RUNNING A GAMBLING HALL HERE BY THIS EVENING! DROP AROUND AND WE'LL TEACH YOU SOME TRICKS!
THAT EVENING, AFTER CLOSING HIS OFFICE, DOC MASTERS QUICKLY DISCARDS HIS HOMESPUN FOR THE GLISTENING BLACK SILK WHICH IS THE MARK OF THE BLACK RIDER!
STRETCH YOUR BONES, BOY! YOU'RE NOT THE SWAY-BACKED ICHABOD ANY LONGER! YOU'RE SATAN, AND WE'VE GOT A DATE WITH A WEASEL!

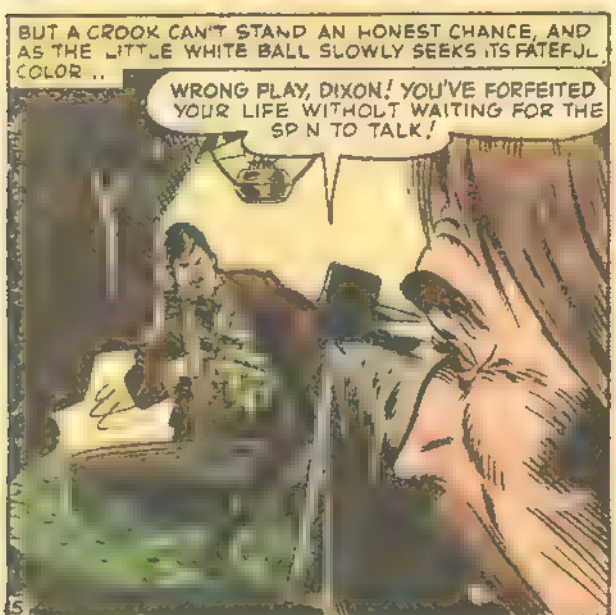
HOW'S IT GO NG, JIG?
WE'RE CLEANIN' UP! THESE SUCKERS HAVEN'T HAD GAMBLIN' N TOWN FOR YEARS! THEY'RE GOIN' HOG-WILD AN' WE'RE TAKIN' EM!
WHA...! WHO'S THAT MONKEY?
THE BLACK RIDER; YOU IDIOT! GET RID OF HIM, IF YOU HAVE TO FILL HIM W.TH LEAD TO DO IT!
YOU AIN'T WELCOME HERE, AMIGO... SO JINGLE YORE SPURS AN' GO BACK TO THE MASQUERADE YOU CAME FROM!
CRAWL BACK INTO THE WOODWORK, YOU SCUM! WHERE'S THE SKUNK WHO PAYS YOU RUSTLER'S WAGES?
WHACK
GET OUT OF HERE, AMIGO! I RUN A DECENT JOINT, NOT A ROUGH-HOUSE BRAWL ROOM!
YOU'VE GOT THAT TWISTED, DIXON ...AND I'M HERE TO PROVE IT! GET TO A TABLE! I'M NOT A GAMBLING MAN, BUT JUST THIS ONCE, I'M TAKING YOU ON AT ANY LIMIT YOU CARE TO MAKE!
PICK YOUR POISON AND LAY OUT YOUR MONEY!
HIGH CARD DRAW... WINNER TAKE ALL!
3

TH RTY SIX OUNCES OF PURE DUST! MATCH IT... AND HAND ME THE DECK!
CONS DER IT MATCHED! IT S YOUR DRAW!
BUT WHILE BLACK R DER'S ATTENT.ON IS DIVERTED FOR A SPLIT SECOND, A CRAFTY HAND SWITCHES THE SACK OF GOLD...
A BLACK KING! DRAW, D.XON!
JUST A MINUTE! I RUN AN HONEST HOUSE AND I DON'T TAKE BETS AGAINST STOLEN GOLD! YOU'RE PLAYING WITH SAGE CITY BANK MONEY!
WHAT KIND OF A LOW TRICK ARE YOU PULLING, DIXON? I LAID DOWN AN UNMARKED SACK!
THERE'S THE SACK YOU LAID DOWN, SO START WHISTLING ANOTHER TUNE! SOMEBODY BETTER CALL THE SHERIFF!
I HATE TO DO THIS, BLACK RIDER... BUT YOU'RE UNDER ARREST! WE'VE TRAILED YOU HERE FROM SAGE CITY! A DOZEN WITNESSES SAW YOU ROB THE BANK!
HAS EVERYONE GONE LOCO? I HAVEN'T BEEN NEAR SAGE CITY IN WEEKS! I'M TELLING YOU THIS MAN IS BLUFFING!
WITH THE EYES OF INDIGNANT CITIZENS STARING ACCUSINGLY AT HIM, THE BLACK RIDER LEAVES W TH THE SHER FF...
YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE, SHERIFF! I KNOW DEUCE DIXON IS INVOLVED N THIS DOUBLE-CROSS!
WE'D SHORE LIKE TO THINK THAT, BUT PROOF IS PROOF!
WITH TIME RUNNING OUT, THE BLACK RIDER RESORTS TO A DESPERATE MOVE TO SAVE HIS HONOR...
I HATE TO DO THIS, BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY!
WHACK
4


MOVE TO THE ROULETTE TABLE FAST, DIXON! WE'RE PLAYING FOR HIGH STAKES ... MY LIFE AGAINST YOURS!
GIVE ME A CHANCE AND I'LL TALK! I ROBBED THE SAGE CITY BANK DISGUISED AS THE BLACK RIDER! I SWITCHED GOLD SACKS WHEN YOU WEREN'T WATCHING!


BUT THE BLACK RIDER TURNS A DEAF EAR TO THE GAMBLER'S PLEAS AND FORCES HIM TO A TABLE...
I PICK THE BLACK! IT'S MY HONOR AGAINST YOUR ROTTEN LIFE THE LOSER FORFEITS HIS LIFE! SPIN THE WHEEL, DIXON.. AND STAY AWAY FROM THE TABLE!
IF I STAY AWAY FROM THE TABLE I CAN'T CONTROL THE WHEEL! I WON'T RISK MY LIFE ON AN HONEST GAMBLE!


THE WHEEL SPINS DIZZILY! THE IVORY BALL HOPS, DANCES, SKIPS, JOLTS FROM RED TO BLACK, BLACK TO RED...
IT'S SLOWING DOWN, DIXON! RED... AND IT'S MY LIFE! BLACK, AND IT'S YOURS!


BUT A CROOK CAN'T STAND AN HONEST CHANCE, AND AS THE LITTLE WHITE BALL SLOWLY SEEKS ITS FATEFUL COLOR ..
WRONG PLAY, DIXON! YOU'VE FORFEITED YOUR LIFE WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE SPIN TO TALK!

THE SHERIFF, HIS DEPUTY AND THE PEOPLE OF LEADVILLE HAD HEARD AND SEEN! AND NOW TWO GUNS DEALT JUSTICE!
BOUGHT... WITH MY HONOR!
BAM!
BAM!
THE END

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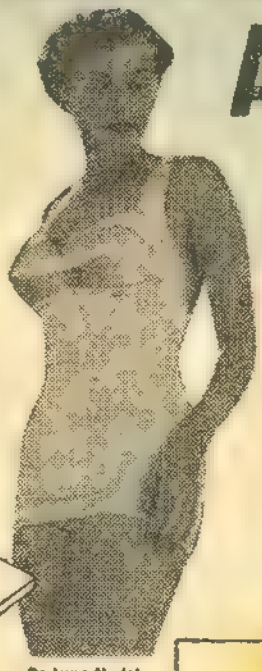

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peaceably. He shook the bars, and cursed at the deputy.

"You got no right to keep me here!. Whyn't yuh go after that dirty crook that robbed me? Huh? What kinda law enforcin' is that?" Each question was punctuated with a kick at the cell door. But the sleepy-eyed deputy just sat calmly whittling away at a stick.

About an hour later the sheriff walked in. He came up to the cell door, unlocked it, and pointed his thumb toward the front door.

"Git!"

"Yuh mean I'm finally free, huh?" spat Tim.

"Don't git sassy with me, younker! Yer boss is out front. If I ever see yer purty face in Dodge City. I'll clink yer in here fer good. Saloon-keeper ain't goin' to per-e-fer charges, so I got to let you go."

Tim slipped out of the jailhouse under the threatening gaze of the old lawman. He mounted his black, and spurred away from the town as fast as he could. This, he thought bitterly, is what I lost me a good job for. To come into Dodge City. The first night I lose my roll, get locked up in jail, and then run outta town. If only . . .

His thoughts were cut off by the sight of smoke, from a campfire, coming out of a bushy draw to his right. Maybe it was some of the boys from the K-Bar. He'd sneak up and surprise them. After dismounting, and picketing his horse, he crept up to the camp-site on his hands and knees. What he saw startled him.

There were two men. One of them was holding a branding iron, and the other a calf that he recognized as belonging to the K-Bar. *But neither of the men was from the Kinley spread!*

He pulled his gun, and—without thinking—yelled out: "You no good, dirty rustlers! Put 'em up!"

A shot creased his forehead. One of the rustlers had a fast draw. He saw the lights go out, and then—blackness.

When he came to, he found himself trussed up, and instead of the rustlers, he found—looking down at him—Rod Kinley. When Rod saw that he was awake, he shouted to two of his boys.

"Okay, he's awake. You c'n show the rustler what it means

tuh steal K-Bar cattle! Too bad my bullet didn't kill him, steada only partin' his hair. *String 'im up!"*

Tim found that his adam's apple wouldn't budge to let him speak. They actually thought that *he* was one of the rustlers, and Rod thought that one of *his* bullets—meant for a rustler—had creased Tim. Finally he found his voice and he argued and pleaded with them. It was to no avail. They dragged him over to a large cottonwood tree, and one of the men began to untie him.

"Yuh gotta believe me fellas! You know I wouldn't rustle—"

He felt a noose slip around his neck. Well he wasn't going to die without a fight. Better a bullet through the back than hanging. He'd bust a couple of heads before he went.

His fist lashed out and took one of his captors on the chin, another one got a foot in the stomach. The noose was off his neck and he was headed for the third when Rod shouted:

"All right boys! That's enough. No use carryin' a joke too far."

That stopped Tim short. "Whaddya mean, joke?" He felt his temper rise. "Yuh mean you knew all the time I wasn't a rustler?"

The men were all laughing, now. Rod Kinley nearly doubled with laughter. "A course not," said one of the boys. "We knew all the time that you just stumbled on them. 'Fact is, Rod here had us foller you into town to see you didn't get into any trouble. We caught that guy that was makin' off with your wad. Here." He tossed it over to Tim. "And we paid the saloon-keeper and had the sheriff let you out."

"Sure," added Rod Kinley. "The boys were watchin' you all the time."

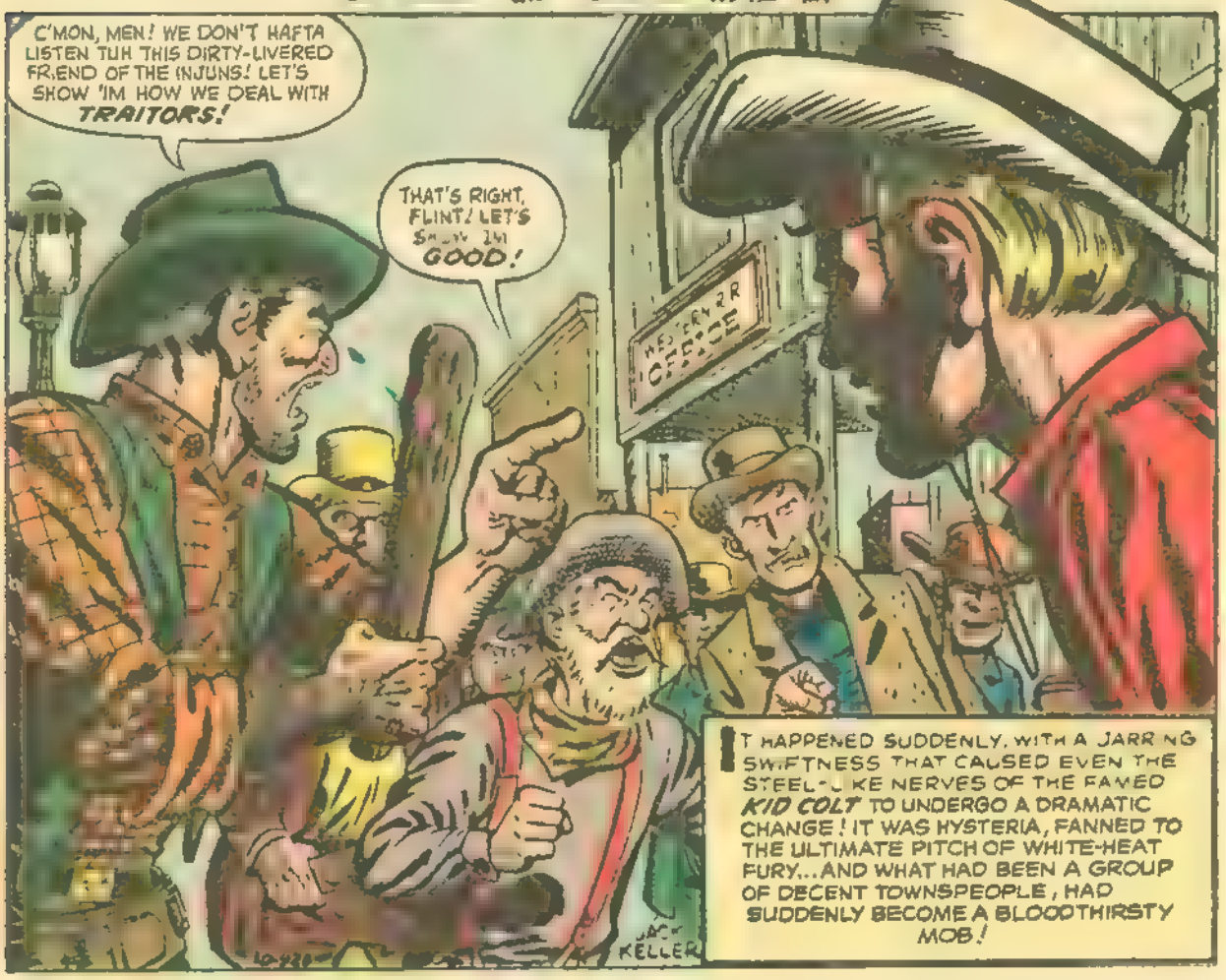
Tim stopped and counted to thirty-five so that his temper should go down. Then he smiled and slapped one of the boys on the back.

"C'mon Tim," said Rod. "The herd's all sold. Now we can go into Dodge City together."

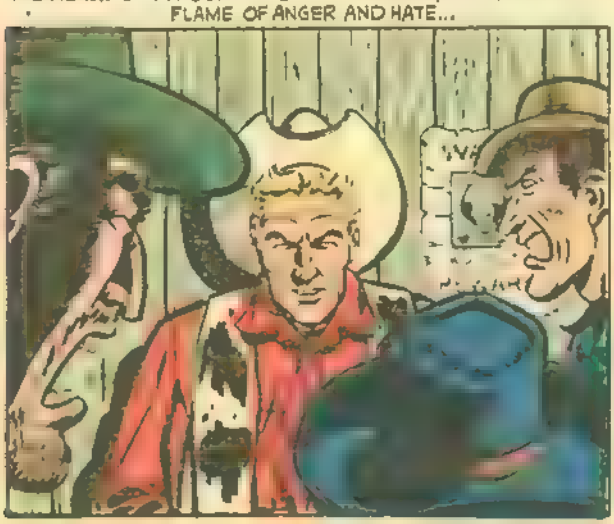
Tim looked up, and scratched his chin. "If you boys don't mind," he said, "I'd just as soon stay here and watch the cookwagon." . . .

THE END 8916

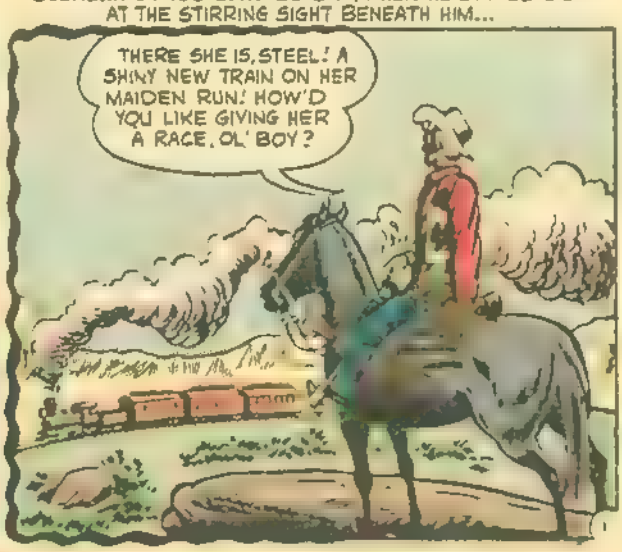
KID COLT OUTLAW


C'MON, MEN! WE DON'T HAFTA LISTEN TUH THIS DIRTY-LIVERED FRIEND OF THE INJUNS! LET'S SHOW 'IM HOW WE DEAL WITH TRAITORS!
THAT'S RIGHT, FLINT! LET'S SHOW 'IM GOOD!
IT HAPPENED SUDDENLY, WITH A JARRING SWIFTNESS THAT CAUSED EVEN THE STEEL-LIKE NERVES OF THE FAMED KID COLT TO UNDERGO A DRAMATIC CHANGE! IT WAS HYSTERIA, FANNED TO THE ULTIMATE PITCH OF WHITE-HEAT FURY... AND WHAT HAD BEEN A GROUP OF DECENT TOWNSPEOPLE, HAD SUDDENLY BECOME A BLOODTHIRSTY MOB!
JACK KELLER

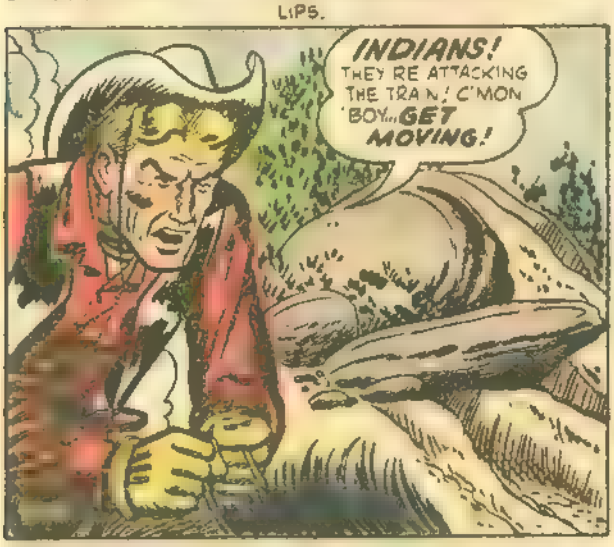
THE FEEL OF A WALL IS AGAINST HIS BACK, AND THROUGH NARROWED EYES, HE WATCHES THEM MOVE IN... SULLEN, ANGRY FACES... FACES DEVOID OF HUMANITY, THEIR MINDS BEYOND THE REACH OF REASON... AND IN THEIR EYES, THE SMOLDERING FLAME OF ANGER AND HATE...



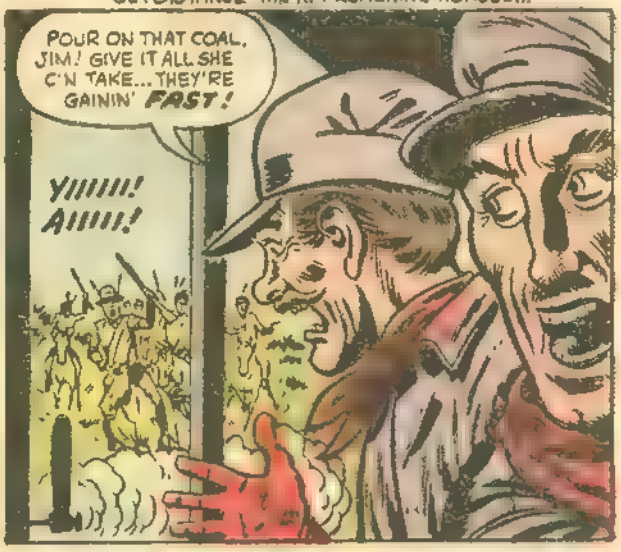
AND IN THAT BRIEF MOMENT, BEFORE RAW FEELINGS CAN UNLEASH THEIR FURY, HIS MIND DARTS BACK TO AN EARLIER SCENE... NOT TOO LONG BEFORE, WHEN HE STARED DOWN AT THE STIRRING SIGHT BENEATH HIM...



HE HAD STARTED DOWN THE SLOPE THE HOOFS OF HIS GREAT HORSE PICKING THEIR WAY CAREFULLY AMONG THE LOOSE SHALE! AND THEN A SUDDEN SIGHT BROUGHT A GASP TO HIS LIPS.

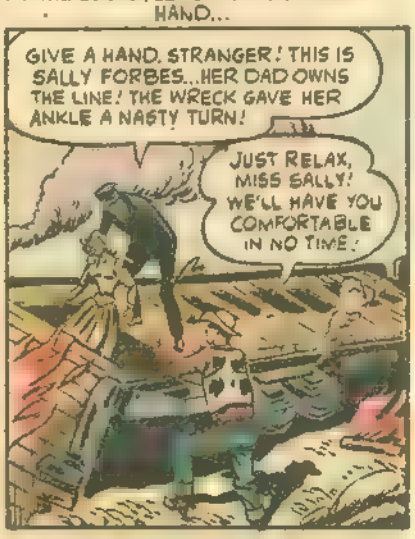


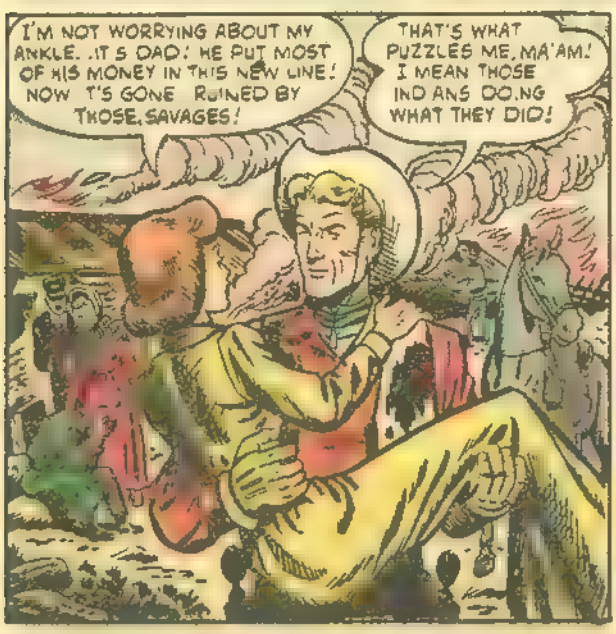
WILD, SAVAGE CRIES FILLED THE AIR, WHILE THE TRAIN, ITS THROTTLE WIDE OPEN, MADE A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO OUTDISTANCE THE APPROACHING HORSES...



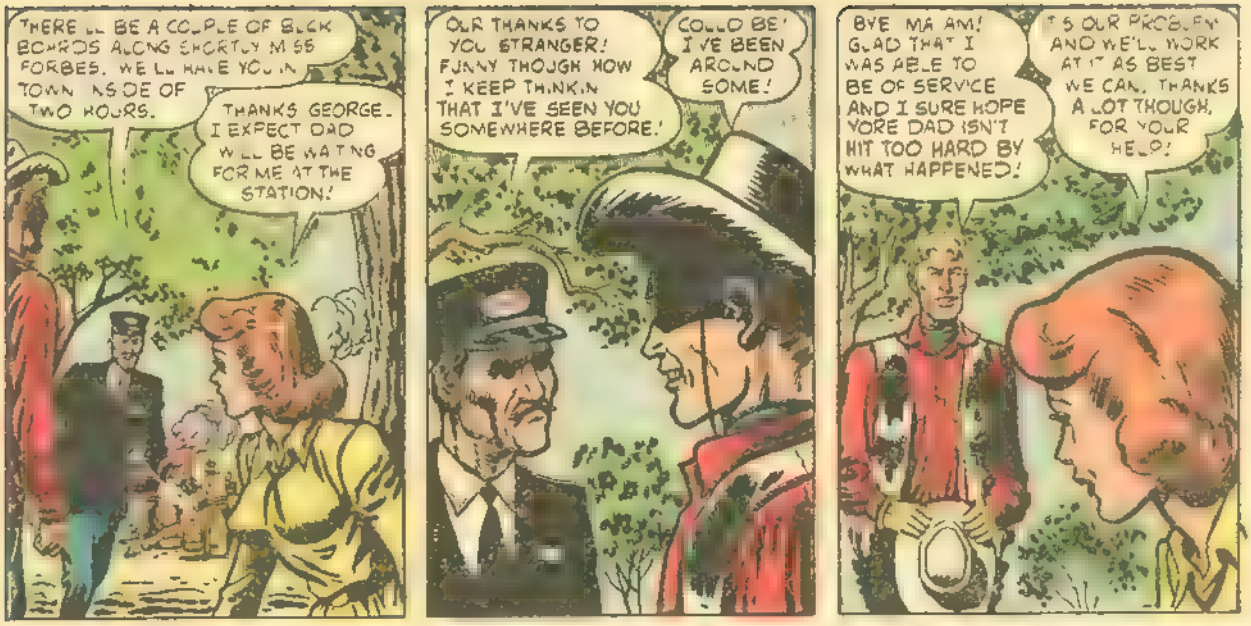
AND A MOMENT LATER, THE UNCONTROLLED TRAIN JUMPED THE TRACK...

FIRE AND SMOKE ADDED TO THE CONFUSION, BUT THE KID WAS ALREADY AT THE SCENE, LENDING A HELPING HAND...


GIVE A HAND, STRANGER! THIS IS SALLY FORBES... HER DAD OWNS THE LINE! THE WRECK GAVE HER ANKLE A NASTY TURN!
JUST RELAX, MISS SALLY! WE'LL HAVE YOU COMFORTABLE IN NO TIME!


I'M NOT WORRYING ABOUT MY ANKLE... IT'S DAD! HE PUT MOST OF HIS MONEY IN THIS NEW LINE! NOW IT'S GONE RUINED BY THOSE SAVAGES!
THAT'S WHAT PUZZLES ME, MA'AM! I MEAN THOSE INDIANS DOING WHAT THEY DID!

WELL, I CAN'T SEE WHY YOU HAVE ANY DOUBTS! IT WAS PLAIN ENOUGH WHO DID IT! I SAW THEM MYSELF!
I SAW THEM TOO, MA'AM AN' LIKE YOU SAID IT WAS PLAIN ENOUGH! ALMOST TOO PLAIN!


THERE'LL BE A COUPLE OF BLOCK BOARDS ALONG SHORTLY MISS FORBES. WE'LL HAVE YOU IN TOWN INSIDE OF TWO HOURS.
THANKS GEORGE. I EXPECT DAD WILL BE WAITING FOR ME AT THE STATION!
OUR THANKS TO YOU STRANGER! FUNNY THOUGH HOW I KEEP THINKIN THAT I'VE SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE.
COULD BE! I'VE BEEN AROUND SOME!
BYE MA AM! GLAD THAT I WAS ABLE TO BE OF SERVICE AND I SURE HOPE YORE DAD ISN'T HIT TOO HARD BY WHAT HAPPENED!
IT'S OUR PROBLEM AND WE'LL WORK AT IT AS BEST WE CAN. THANKS A LOT THOUGH, FOR YOUR HELP!

SO HE MOUNTED HIS HORSE AND RODE OFF, BUT ALL THE WHILE THE THOUGHTS KEPT TURNING AROUND IN HIS HEAD...

SHE'S A REAL PLUCKY GAL! WE CAN JUST RIDE OUTTA HERE AN' FORGET ALL ABOUT IT, OR INVESTIGATE THINGS A LITTLE FURTHER! AN' TO MY WAY O' THINKIN', MEBBE WE'D BETTER INVESTIGATE!

THE ONLY INDIANS IN THE TERRITORY ARE COMANCHES. AN' THE TRIBE IS LED BY MY FRIEND, WHITE EAGLE! RECKON WE'D BETTER HAVE A LITTLE PALAVER AN' FIND OUT WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT!

LATE THAT SAME NIGHT AS A FULL MOON SHONE DOWN ON THE COMANCHES' COUNCIL FIRE, THE KID HEARD A STRANGE STORY...

...AND SO IT COULD NOT BE ANY OF MY BRAVES WHITE BROTHER! ONLY TODAY WE HOLD GREAT FEAST FOR CORN HARVEST. EVERY INDIAN IN TRIBE PRESENT TILL MOON SHINE IN SKY! THAT IS TRUTH!
AND I BELIEVE YOU WHITE EAGLE!

THAT MEANS IT WAS OTHERS POSING AS COMANCHES! THE QUESTION NOW IS, HOW DO WE SMOKE 'EM OUT?
WHATEVER YOUR PLAN, WHITE EAGLE AND HIS BROTHERS WILL HELP YOU! THOSE WHO WOULD BRING BAD NAME TO COMANCHES MUST BE DESTROYED!

LEAVING THE COMANCHE CAMP THE KID RODE HARD FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE NIGHT AND WHEN MORNING CAME HE WAS IN THE OFFICE OF LESTER P FORBES OWNER OF THE LINE

YOU'RE ASKING ME TO MAKE A SECOND RUN! WHAT GUARANTEE HAVE I THAT THIS TIME WON'T BE AMBUSHED TOO

NO GUARANTEE MR FORBES! IT'S A CHANCE YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE!

I BELIEVE HIM DAD I THINK HE OUGHT TO DO IT THIS WAY.

ALL RIGHT SALLY WE'LL MAKE THE RUN AT EIGHT THIS EVENING I'LL PASS THE WORD TO MY MEN AND THEY'LL COOPERATE FULLY!

WITH A CAUTION KNOWN ONLY TO THOSE WHO MUST LIVE OUTSIDE THE LAW THE KID SLIPPED OUT THROUGH A SIDE DOOR. BUT AS HE PREPARED TO LEAVE THE SOUND OF ANGRY VOICES FROZE HIM TO THE SPOT

I SAY WE GIT OUR RIFLES AN' HUNT THEM INJUNS DOWN

SURE KILL EVERY ONE OF 'EM!

C'MON! WHAT'RE WE WAITIN' FOR.

SOUNDS BAD! IF THEY EVER GET STARTED IT'LL PUT EVERY INDIAN IN THE TERRITORY ON THE WAR PATH!

SO HE DID THE ONE THING ANY MAN WORTH HIS SALT WOULD DO. HE FACED THE CROWD AND TOLD THEM EXACTLY WHAT HE THOUGHT...

.. AND I'M ASKING YOU MEN TO KEEP A COOL HEAD. I TELL YOU THOSE INDIANS WEREN'T AGOIN' TO START LETTING BLOOD RUN NOW AN' I'LL KEEP ON RUNNING!

FOR A MOMENT AFTER HE FINISHED SPEAKING THERE WAS SILENCE. BUT SOON A MURMUR LIKE A TIDAL WAVE GATHERING FORCE, SWEPT TOWARD HIM .

I KNOW WHO HE IS! HE'S KID COLT, OUTLAW!

THEN WHAT'RE WE LISTENIN' FOR? HE'S PROBABLY IN CAHOOTS WITH THEM INJUNS. HE COULD'VE PUT 'EM UP TO IT, FIGGERIN' HE'D GET EVEN WITH US LAW-ABIDIN' FOLKS!

THAT'S WHAT BROUGHT HIM HERE WITH THE FEEL OF THE WALL AGAINST HIS BACK AND THE SMOLDERING ANGER OF THE CROWD INCHING TOWARD HIM LIKE DEATH ON THE MOVE...

HANGIN'S TOO GOOD FER THIS SNAKE! I SAY BEAT 'IM INTO THE DUST HERE AN' NOW!

BUT SUDDENLY THE SKILLED HANDS MAKE THEIR FAMOUS DRAW...A MOVEMENT REVEALING THE SPEED OF A STRIKING RATTLER!

I'M RIDIN' OUTTA HERE AN THERE'S A .45 SLUG WAITING FOR ANYBODY WHO TRIES TO STOP ME! YOU MIGHT THINK OVER WHAT I TOLD YOU TOO. KEEP THEM HEADS COOL OR YOU MIGHT **LOSE** EM!

SILENTLY, THE AWE-STRUCK CROWD FALLS BACK, AND SOON THE DISTANT POUND OF HORSES HOOFBEATS SMALL THAT REMAINS OF THE BRIEF ENCOUNTER WITH THE FAMED OUTLAW

I'D BETTER SEE CROWLEY RIGHT AWAY! HE'LL WANNA KNOW ABOUT THIS!

SHORTLY AFTERWARDS...

HE'S ON TH SOMETHIN, CROWLEY! THE FIGGERS THE INJUNS HAD NOTHIN' TUH DO WITH THE WRECK! HE'S GOT SOME OF 'EM THINKIN' THET WAY RIGHT NOW!

WE'LL MAKE 'EM CHANGE THEIR MINDS AGAIN SOON ENOUGH FORBES S MAKIN' ANOTHER RUN THIS EVENING! SEE THAT THE BOYS GET BACK INTO THEM INDIAN COSTUMES! WE'RE GONNA MAKE A REPEAT PERFORMANCE!

ONE MORE WRECK AND FORBES WILL BE OUT OF BUSINESS FOR GOOD! NO ONE'LL EVEN THINK OF USIN' HIS LINE AGAIN! THAT MEANS MY STAGES WILL BE CARRYIN' ALL THE FREIGHT LIKE IT DID BEFORE!

THAT NIGHT, THE CLICK OF STEEL WHEELS ECHOES RHYTHMICALLY ACROSS THE GRASSY PLAIN! A SWIRL OF BLACK SMOKE ETCHES THE FACE OF A FULL MOONLAND THE CRY OF THE WHISTLE IS A NEW SOUND BENEATH THE WESTERN SKY...

AND INSIDE ONE OF THE COMPARTMENTS...

THERE WAS NO POINT IN YOUR MAKING THE RUN WITH US! SALLY YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED BACK IN TOWN LIKE I ASKED YOU!

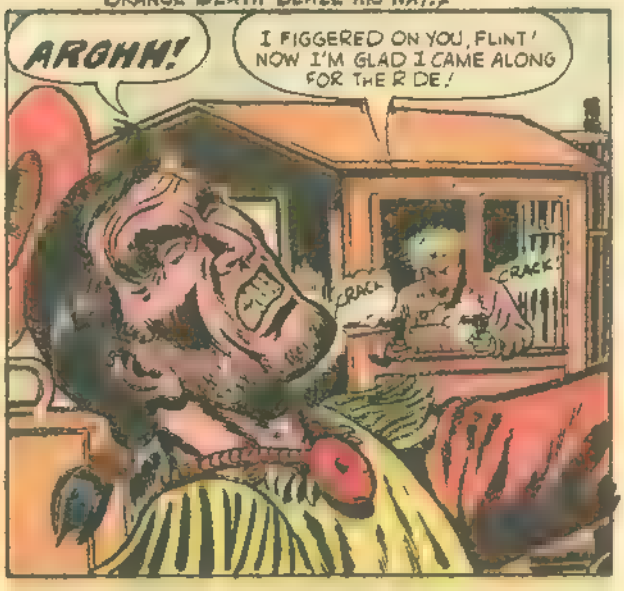
NO, DAD! MY PLACE IS WITH YOU! THIS LINE IS MUCH MORE THAN JUST WOOD AND STEEL! I BELIEVE THAT IT WILL OPEN A NEW WAY OF LIFE AND MAKING THIS RUN IS MY WAY OF KEEPING FAITH!

AS THE TRAIN MOVES ON THROUGH THE NIGHT, FLINT AND HIS MEN WATCH ITS APPROACH FROM A POINT OF VANTAGE...

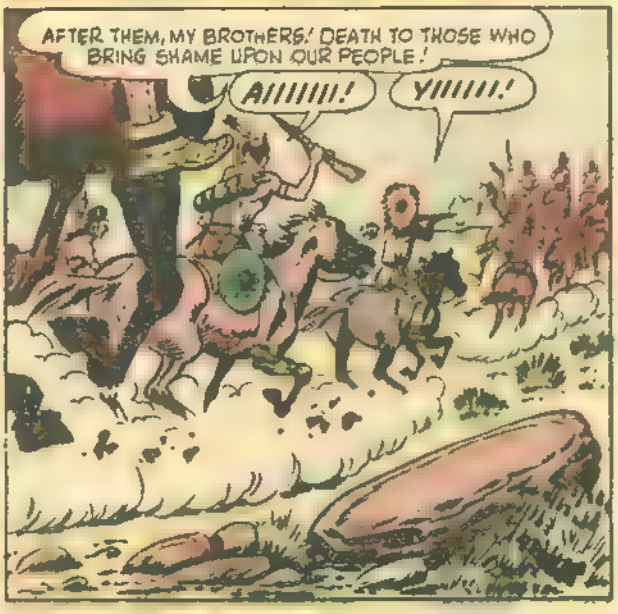
HERE IT COMES NOW! WHEN I GIVE THE SIGNAL WHOOP IT UP REAL LOUD AND HEAD FER THE ENGINE.

THEN IN A SHATTERING RUSH, THE MASQUERADING GUNMEN STRIKE!

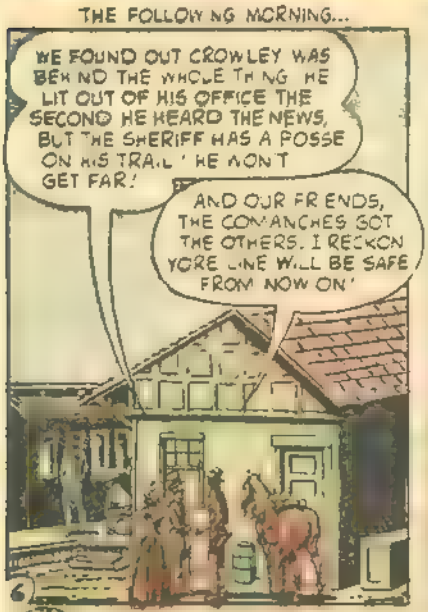
BUT AS FLINT DRAWS ALONGSIDE THE CAB, TWIN SPURTS OF ORANGE DEATH BLAZE HIS WAY...



BUT THE NIGHT HOLDS STILL ANOTHER SURPRISE ONE THAT BRINGS RISING TERROR TO THE WOULD-BE TRAIN WRECKERS!

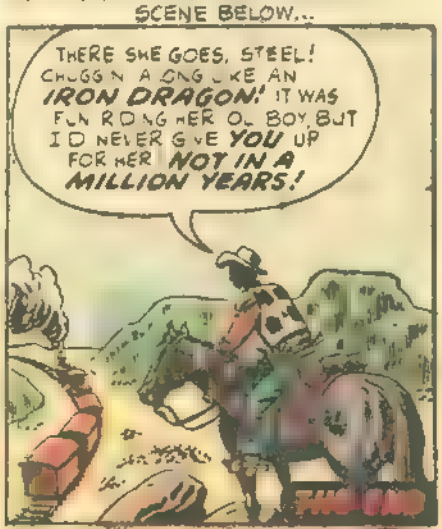


THE FOLLOWING MORNING...


WE FOUND OUT CROWLEY WAS BEHIND THE WHOLE THING. HE LIT OUT OF HIS OFFICE THE SECOND HE HEARD THE NEWS, BUT THE SHERIFF HAS A POSSE ON HIS TRAIL. HE WON'T GET FAR!
AND OUR FRIENDS, THE COMANCHES GOT THE OTHERS. I RECKON YORE LINE WILL BE SAFE FROM NOW ON!

THANKS TO YOU, DAD SAYS YOU'D MAKE A PERFECT ENGINEER. YOU WOULDN'T BE INTERESTED IN A NEW JOB, WOULD YOU?
GUESS NOT, MA'AM. TRAINS ARE ALL RIGHT I RECKON BUT NOT FOR AN OL' SADDLE-MAN LIKE MYSELF!

AND SO THE KID WHEELS HIS HORSE AROUND AND HEADS FOR THE HILLS! HIGH ABOVE THE VALLEY HE COMES TO A HALT, HIS EYES SCANNING THE SPREADING SCENE BELOW...


THERE SHE GOES, STEEL! CHUGGIN ALONG LIKE AN IRON DRAGON! IT WAS FUN RIDING HER OL' BOY, BUT I'D NEVER GIVE YOU UP FOR HER NOT IN A MILLION YEARS!
THE END

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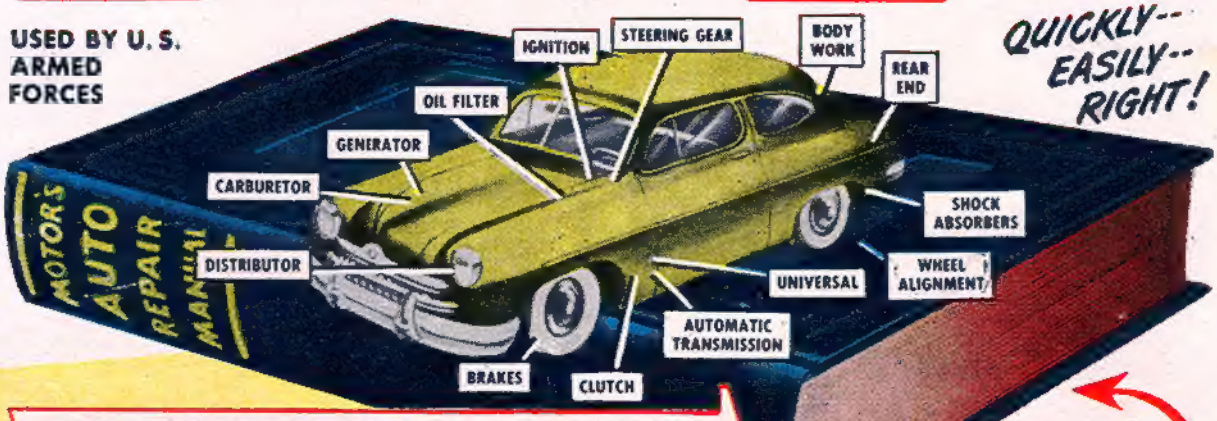

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